DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 250 829 EA 017 346

AUTHOR Griffin, Teresa; And Others
TITLE A Pilot Test for Documenting Principal Interventions.
INSTITUTION Texas Univ., Austin. Research and Development Center for Teacher Education.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO R&DCTE-R-3130
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 41p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association (Dallas, TX, 1981).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Data Collection; Educational Innovation; Elementary Secondary Education; Field Interviews; Intervention; Personal Narratives; *Principals; *Questioning Techniques; Research Design; *Research Methodology; *Teacher Administrator Relationship
IDENTIFIERS Concerns Based Adoption Model

ABSTRACT

In preparation for a major research study on change in schools, a 3-month pilot study of principals in 10 schools was conducted in central Texas. The main purpose of the study was to investigate different ways to document the actions taken by the principals to facilitate implementation of innovations in their schools. In this paper, the procedures and methodology of the pilot study are described, followed by analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the five data collection procedures tested: (1) a written log maintained weekly by the principal; (2) a weekly report submitted via audio tape; (3) weekly reports over the telephone; (4) a monthly face-to-face "game plan" interview; (5) a face-to-face Stages of Concern interview. Results of the pilot study led to the conclusion that a combination of logging and interviewing procedures might be used in the major study. An ideal technique, resulting from the research, is described, and other implications of the pilot study for the collection and analysis of qualitative data are discussed. An appendix provides an overview of the major study and its procedures. (TE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

EA

ED250829

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

A PILOT TEST FOR DOCUMENTING PRINCIPAL INTERVENTIONS

Teresa Griffin
Marcia Goldstein
Gene E. Hall

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

RDCTE-R-3130

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Dallas, 1931

EA 017 346

A PILOT TEST OF METHODS FOR DOCUMENTING PRINCIPAL INTERVENTIONS[1]

Teresa Griffin
Marcia Goldstein
Gene E. Hall

Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
The University of Texas at Austin

In preparation for a major research study on change in schools, a three-month pilot study was conducted in ten schools in central Texas. This pilot study was conducted for several purposes, the main one being to investigate different ways of collecting information about interventions that school principals make as they are facilitating implementation of innovations in their schools. Previous studies done by the CBAM Project at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education had used ethnographic techniques for collecting information about the actions of principals and other change facilitators; this pilot was designed to test alternative methods of intervention documentation based on self reports by principals.

PERSPECTIVES AND ASSUMPTIONS

Several perspectives and assumptions, based on previous research, have guided the design of our studies over the years. These assumptions and the framework for the research described here have their foundation in the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM), which was developed at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at The University of Texas.

The research described herein was conducted under contract with the National Institute of Education. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the National Institute of Education, and no endorsement by the National Institute of Education snould be inferred.

A key premise of the CBAM is that change is a process. It occurs over time, and is facilitated not by one or two "events," e.g., a mandate by the district or a "hit and run" workshop, but by a series of actions or events, called interventions, which influence individuals and their use of an innovation over time. Therefore, longitudinal study designs are required for much of the research on change.

In our research, the individual and the innovation serve as the basic frame of reference. Past research has focused on initial verification of two major dimensions of the CBAM that can be used to describe how individuals can develop as an innovation is being adopted. The dimension of Stages of Concern About the Innovation (SoC) addresses the individual's perceptions of the innovation and explain how concerns shift as the change process unfolds (Hall, George & Rutherford, 1977). The second dimension, Levels of Use of the Innovation (LoU), focuses on the behaviors of the individual and how he/she uses the innovation (Hall, Loucks, Rutherford & Newlove, 1975). Analysis of the components of an innovation serves as the third dimension of the diagnostic framework of the CBAM. The concept of Innovation Configurations (Hall & Loucks, 1981) describes how an innovation can be adapted and perhaps mutated by different users. These concepts have been studied extensively in past research.

The CBAM Project's present research is expanding to include not only the individual front-line users and nonusers of innovations, but also the various actors who influence innovation use. The generic label "change facilitator" is used to refer to this role and function. Administrators, staff developers, evaluators, teacher educators, curriculum coordinators and many others can have as a part of their role the facilitating of change. The principal in particular has been frequently highlighted as the key change facilitator in a school. Brickell (1961) observed that although the principal may not be the source of an

innovation, her/his interest and active involvement is essential to its initiation and implementation. Berman and McLaughlin (1978) have said that "the importance of the principal to both short- and long-run effects of innovations can hardly be overstated." They also have called the principal the "gatekeeper of change." The current evidence that principals influence the extent of implementation is reviewed by Fullan (1980). Hall, Hord and Griffin of the CBAM Project analyzed nine case studies of change in elementary schools, and based on the data, hypothesized that "the implementation of the innovation was different in different schools primarily because of the actions and concerns of the principal." However, previous studies have not documented exactly what the principal does to facilitate change, and that is the focus of current research by the CBAM Project staff.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In the CBAM, it is proposed that the interventions of change facilitators, including principals, should be targeted toward the needs of individual users based on their Stages of Concern, Levels of Use and the Configuration of the Innovation that is being used. In order to study these interventions, particularly those of principals, it was necessary to develop ways to document the actions taken to facilitate implementation. One past study by CBAM had used ethnographic techniques to observe actions of individuals, both teachers and facilitators, involved in implementation. Ethnography produced data in quantities, but the data were unfocused. Data reduction from protocols to usable data was difficult and time consuming to accomplish, and ethnographic data proved to be expensive not only to collect, but to analyze (Zigarmi & Goldstein, 1979). Self report procedures were seen as a viable alternative to ethnography.

With a sample of ten principals in central Texas, variations on procedures for having principals report their own interventions and those of others were piloted. To check on the validity of the self reports, teachers would be used to verify principal reports. Limited observation in the schools would also be used to collect data which would be imposible to get through principals' interviews and logs. In this paper, these procedures and the methodology of the pilot study will be described, followed by an analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the data collection procedures tested. After a discussion of these topics, the paper will conclude with a discussion of recommendations and issues concerning documentation of principal interventions.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The three-month pilot study sample consisted of ten principals; two principals were assigned to each of five self report procedures. Nine were principals of public schools; one served a private school. Three were female; number of years as a principal ranged from two to twenty years. The schools were located in several school districts in central Texas. All were elementary schools, as the major study would be done in elementary schools. Schools were selected to represent different phases of implementation, so the sample included the first, second, and third years of implementation of different curricula.

Methods of Data Collection

Variations of methods of collecting data were piloted in this study for the purpose of choosing a method or combination of methods for the national-level study. The intervention data we were particularly interested in were:

1. What actions were taken by the principal or other change facilitator

2. Why they were taken

3. What persons were the target of the actions

4. When did the action occur

5. How long did it take

6. What were the effects of the action.

A logging sheet including these categories was developed and used for recording information collected (see Figure 1).

Five variations in the procedures were developed and tested. Two principals were assigned to each variation. These were:

1. A written log was maintained on a weekly basis by the principal. Principals were asked to describe each of their own and other facilitators' interventions by writing them on logging sheets, providing information in the six categories mentioned above. Principals were asked to mail their logs each week to our office in stamped, addressed envelopes provided by the project.

2. A weekly report was submitted via audio tape. The procedure for this method was basically the same as for the written log, except that these principals tape recorded their information rather than writing it down. They were asked to use the same categories as on the written log when making their tapes, and had a sample log sheet as a reminder of the information we were seeking. Tape recorders, tapes, and mailers for weekly submission of the tapes were provided by the research project. A project staff member filled in log sheets based on the information on the tapes.

3. Weekly reports were given on the telephone. On a designated day each week, project members contacted principals by telephone in order to obtain descriptions of interventions made by the principal or others the previous week. The project member probed for more information about actions mentioned by the principal, when necessary, to obtain complete data. These conversations were

PRINCIPAL LOG

Figure 1

Name _____ IDP 2

Week of _____, 19 ____

Coding for R&D Use	Date	Target(s)	Actions Taken: What Did You Do?	Intent: Why Did You Do It?	How Long Did Your Action Take?	What were the Effects?

Mail your log(s) each week to the UTR&D Center in the envelopes we have provided.

taped (with principal permission) and interventions were transferred to log sheets by the project staff member.

4. A face-to-face "Game Plan" interview was conducted. Once a month a project staff person visited the school and interviewed the principal about the interventions he/she had been making related to the specified innovation. The six Game Plan components of the Intervention Taxonomy were used to structure this interview (Hord, 1981). For example, a question related to the Game Plan Component "Training" asked, "Have your teachers received any training or other information about the innovation since our last interview?" Examples of interventions were provided in the interview to remind the principal of the type of information being sought.

5. A face-to-face Stages of Concern interview was conducted. This method was identical to Method 4, except that Stages of Concern were used to structure the interview questions. For example, teachers often express concerns about the management of an innovation. The SoC-based interview asks, "Have you noticed any problems with materials or management or use of the innovation? (Scheduling, organizing, obtaining materials, managing time, etc.) How did you handle such problems when they surfaced?"

At the end of the pilot study, for the final interview, Methods 4 and 5 were combined and used with the four principals assigned to the two interview methods. This was done to see if richer data could be obtained with the combination interview. These interviews were later compared to Methods 4 and 5.

Training for Principals

One of the R&D Center's staff was assigned to each principal to train the principal in the methodology and to be a contact person from the research project. In order for the principal to understand what the research was about, and

what the methodology entailed, the assigned researcher visited with the principal at the school for one to two hours for a training session. After an overview of the study design and purpose, each principal was introduced to the definition of an intervention and the levels of interventions. Some examples of interventions were discussed so the principal would be better able to identify which actions would be considered interventions (see Figure 2). Then the assigned procedure was explained, and a practice session was held, with the principal and the researcher playing their respective roles. A training packet (see Appendix A) was left with the principal for further reference, as well as any materials needed for carrying out the assigned methodology. For example, the principals who were to tape record their interventions had in their training packet a tape recorder provided by the research project, sufficient tapes for the duration of the pilot study, and stamped mailers addressed to the research project. Each principal was provided a calendar, with study-related dates marked as reminders, and large enough spaces for each day so that notes could be kept on interventions as they occurred.

An additional purpose of the training session was for the researchers to meet and build some rapport with the principals; this was considered particularly necessary for those principals who would not be providing information to an interviewer face-to-face.

Teacher Interviews

At the conclusion of the pilot study, three teachers from five of the sample schools (fifteen teachers total) were interviewed to determine whether teachers recalled and could verify the interventions reported by the principals. The five schools represented all five methods of data collection. A staff member visited each randomly selected teacher and, after introductory remarks,

PRINCIPAL LOG -- SAMPLE SHEET

Name _____

Figure 2

Week of _____, 19 ___

Coding for R&D Use	Date	Target(s)	Actions Taken: What Did You Do?	Intent: Why Did You Do It?	How Long Did Your Action Take?	What Were the Effects?
	10/24/77	All science teachers	At a staff meeting at the school, I encouraged teachers to take more field trips and utilize the area around the school for teaching science.	Using the outdoors is part of new science curriculum, but teachers are not accustomed to this type of field trip.	15 min.	More field trips being taken.
	10/15/77	6th grade teachers and students	I ordered flat top tables for science room.	Science specialist suggested we need flat top desks for microscopes and experiments.	5 min.	None yet -- they haven't arrived, but teachers beginning to realize the importance of teaching science.

Mail your log(s) each week to the UTR&D Center in the envelopes we have provided.

asked this general question about the implementation of the innovation in their school: "Can you recall anything that has happened over the last three months that influenced, positively or negatively, your use of (innovation)?" Then the teacher was asked other questions directed at determining if they could verify specific interventions which had been reported by their principal during the study.

Debriefing of Principals

At the conclusion of data collection, each participant in the study was visited at the school by a member of the project staff to discuss his/her reactions to participation in the study. The questions asked were:

1. What was your general reaction to participating in the study?
2. Did it cause any problems for you?
3. What could have been done to make it easier?
4. Now that you've had some experience with our project, what do you think would be the easiest and most efficient way for you to share information with us?
5. Approximately how much time per week did you spend on this task?
6. Did your involvement in this study change, in any way, your actions or involvement with _____ (innovation)?

FINDINGS

The data were analyzed to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of various methodologies in order to select the procedures to be used in the proposed major study which was to begin in May, 1980. Several aspects of the usefulness of the data were considered: level of compliance of the subjects with the procedures; sufficiency, completeness and appropriateness of data; whether the method yielded bonus data; agreement between the principal's self report and

the teachers' verification of interventions; the satisfaction and comfort of both researchers and subjects in collecting the data; and finally, cost efficiency.

Compliance

The person-to-person methods of telephone logs and in-person interviews resulted in more compliance than the mail-in methods. All of the telephone logs and in-person interviews planned were completed. One principal who did written logs mailed in only one log; one principal who was assigned to tape interventions mailed in no tapes. There was no built in measure to insure compliance for those who were asked to mail in taped or written logs; however, three weeks into the data collection period, each principal who was not responding was called to see if they wanted to continue participating. Both responded that they would begin sending in data.

Completeness and Appropriateness of Data

Those methods that had ongoing person-to-person contact, even if not face-to-face, tended to produce more complete and appropriate data than the mail-in methods. Researchers were able to clarify the subjects' questions about interventions and also to ask further questions when accounts were incomplete. The written logs and the tape recordings that were mailed in by principals generally contained information in all the categories on the log sheets; however, much was left unsaid about links between one intervention and another. The telephone logs resulted in abundant data on day-to-day interventions. The in-person interviews, like the telephone logs, yielded much information on day-to-day actions, while providing more information on long-range plans and strategies than did the telephone, taped, or written logs.

Bonus Date

The in-person interviews yielded very rich data, including information on background, philosophy, context, and reasons behind interventions. On-site visits for interviews also provided a limited opportunity to observe interactions between principal and teachers or students. The other methods produced little bonus data.

Agreement Between Teachers and Principal Reports

All the methods used appeared to be valid in that teachers verified the interventions reported by the principals. When interviewers asked teachers in the five schools questions aimed at verifying interventions which had been reported by their principal, 39 out of the 40 interventions targeted were confirmed by at least one teacher. The one uncomfirmed intervention was the writing and mailing of a letter from the principal to an innovation facilitator outside the school; perhaps there was no opportunity for teachers to have learned of this action. Figure 3 indicates the percentages of interventions verified by teachers in the various schools. Many factors would influence the verification rate (types of interventions reported, teacher-teacher communication in the school, intervening style of the principal, interviewer style), but the chart indicates that the written log was the least successful method of documenting interventions that would be observed and recalled by teachers. This was also the method which resulted in the unconfirmed intervention. The other methods resulted in verifiable data, with a variance among teachers in the number they recalled and confirmed.

Satisfaction and Comfort

Interestingly, seven out of the ten principals said they were satisfied with the method to which they were assigned. The exceptions were three of the

Figure 3

Percentage of Principal Reported Interventions Verified by Teachers

	Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Overall Verification
School 1 (Telephone Log)	87%	100%	80%	86%
School 2 (Taped Log)	67%	100%	56%	74%
School 3 (SoC Interview)	67%	67%	83%	72%
School 4 (GP Interview)	80%	60%	73%	71%
School 5 (Written Log)	60%	40%	40%	46%

principals who were asked to mail in taped or written logs of their interventions. Both principals in the taped log group said they would have preferred another method: this was demonstrated by an obvious discomfort with the method to which they were assigned. One did not complete the task and the other wrote out notes and had an aide read them into the tape recorder.

The personal interview was thought to be the best method of documenting principals' actions by five of the participants; three favored the telephone interview; one preferred the written logs; one was not sure whether written logs or a personal interview would have been best. One of those who said the personal interview would be best said, "The best way...is to sit me down and ask me a question point-blank." On the other hand, one who preferred the telephone log said a principal would "feel more in command" on the telephone than in a personal interview. Those who mentioned the telephone realized that it was more cost efficient than a personal interview, and were in agreement that it would be best to meet the caller before being telephoned. It was also noted that a principal is less likely to be interrupted on the telephone or in a personal interview than when writing or tape recording their interventions.

Researcher Reactions

Since the research staff would be asked to collect similar information from principals in the larger scale study, each staff member who participated in the pilot study was asked to report on his/her reactions to the methodologies. Most of the staff preferred the in-person interviews to any of the other methodologies. Telephone logs were next in comfort level for the researchers. Due to the limited interpersonal contact with the principals, researchers found it most difficult to follow those principals with whom there was face-to-face contact only at the beginning and the end of the study. The researchers assigned to

principals who did not send in their tapes or written logs said they were uncomfortable at the concluding debriefing session.

Effect of Participation on Principals' Actions

To what extent did participation in the research effort affect the principals' actions? Each one was asked to respond to this question, and all agreed that it increased their awareness of their actions. However, five of the ten principals asserted that this increased awareness did not change what they actually did. Several said that they did not directly intervene more, but rather did more planning and "stayed on top of things a little more." Several said they consciously held back from intervening more than normal so that the research results would not be skewed. Only one was clearly motivated by participation to introduce some new activities related to the innovation in question.

DISCUSSION

Contributions to the National Level Study

The results of the pilot study of variations on procedures for documenting interventions led us to conclude that a combination of logging and interviewing procedures might be used in our major study. Clearly there are some trade-offs. There is less richness in the data in comparison to pure ethnography, for example, but there are also gains in the areas of cost and data manageability.

A hybrid logging/interviewing procedure was designed to incorporate many of the best features of the piloted variations. The results suggested that the ideal technique would include the following features:

a) Data collected at regular intervals so that key information is not forgotten or lost.

b) Some form of interviewing in order to fill out descriptions and

to stimulate recall or other happenings that might not have been recorded.

c) The recording procedures could not be burdensome to the subjects.

d) The procedures must facilitate obtaining information about all parts of each intervention.

e) The procedure must allow the subjects to provide elaborative data as well as data on the parts of interventions.

f) The procedure must be able to accommodate large geographic distances between the subjects and the researchers.

g) The procedures must facilitate obtaining information about all parts of each intervention.

h) There has to be a system for checking on single source reports of at least a sample of the overall set of interventions.

The hybrid logging/interviewing procedure that was finalized and is being used in the major study includes the following components:

1) One research staff member assigned to each principal to provide continuity and to personalize the interchange.

2) A pre-data collecting training session for principals and assistant principals[2] to provide orientation toward the intervention levels and parts.

3) Provision of a logging portfolio to principals that includes (a) a calendar, (b) samples of intervention recording sheets, (c) a synopsis of the intervention level definitions, (d) examples of interventions, and (e) the research staff liaison person's phone number and address.

4) Bi-weekly phone calls to each principal. These phone calls are used to clarify past reports as well as to document the activities of the last two weeks.

5) On-site visits at regular intervals (September, January and May) with focused interviewing of the principal.

6) Audio tape recording of the phone calls and on-site visits by the research staff member.

---

[2]In the pilot study, none of the schools had an assistant principal; in the 1980-81 study, in those sites with an assistant principal, he/she is treated as another key change facilitator and his/her interventions are documented in the same way as the principal's.

7) Interviews with teachers and central office staff, during on-site visits, to nominate additional interventions and to describe in their words the occurrences and effects of specific interventions that the principals have identified.

8) Coding of each intervention on a specially developed coding form by the research staff member.

In our major study, the procedure appears to be providing a steady stream of usable data about the day-to-day intervening that occurs as a change process unfolds in individual schools. We are able to avoid the large data collection and data reduction costs of ethnography and at the same time have not created a major burden for the participating principals.

However, some issues were not resolved by the pilot study. Clearly, asking principals to record their interventions leads them to thinking more about intervening. As odd as it may be, our tentative impression from the pilot study and the nation-wide study is that this does not appear to lead to a principal doing many more interventions! The amount of intervening and the type of intervening done appears to be more closely related to what we call their change facilitating style, which is the focus of our major study.

Another issue has to do with the depth of our intervention sampling. It is difficult to estimate how complete a sample of principal interventions we are obtaining. Principals also might be doing a number of things that go unreported. We may only be sampling the top third of the barrel or scraping the bottom. Without resorting to some form of ethnography we probably cannot develop an empirical answer to this issue. Our basic assumption then becomes that proportionately, we are sampling to the same depth for all principals.

Other Implications

In addition to contributing to the design of the major study, this research adds to the scientific knowledge of collection and analysis of qualitative data. In general, the study reinforces the effectiveness of self report as a method of

obtaining information on an individual's actions. This is not to say that self reporting does not have its limitations. As mentioned previously, we cannot be certain that we have obtained data on all significant interventions taken by the principal. However, the teacher interviews, subsequent to the principal data collection, verified that interventions that principals reported did, indeed, happen.

More specifically, the study suggests a number of things about how to increase the effectiveness of self reporting. First, interviewing with specific probes appears to stimulate the interviewee's memory of actions taken in the past. We found that merely asking principals, "What have you done in the last few weeks related to this innovation?" was not as effective as questioning about actions in specific, functional categories such as training, scheduling, or conferring. There might be questions here about the tendency toward "yea- saying." Our experience with LoU interviewing and intervention interviewing suggests that when individuals are asked to be specific about their actions, this tendency is greatly reduced.

Finally, this study reveals a number of benefits of personal interaction between subject and researcher when self report is the mode of data collection. In addition to stimulating the memory of past action, personal contact increases tendencies to comply with the study. Individuals are considerably more likely to remember or to keep notes on their actions if they know the researcher is going to call to collect the information than if they are required to mail in reports on their actions each week. Personal interaction also produces more appropriate and complete data than do a paper/pencil technique. The researcher can probe to fill in missing information as well as to clarify vague responses.

To summarize our findings, this study indicates that self report is a valid and effective method of collecting data on individual actions, but personal interaction appears to be a necessary ingredient in producing this effectiveness.

References

Berman, P. & McLaughoin, M. W. Federal programs supporting educational change, Vol. III: Implementing and sustaining innovations. Santa Monica: The Rand Corporation, 1978.

Brickell, H. Organizing New York State for change. Albany: State Education Department, 1961.

Fullan, M. The role of human agents internal to school districts in knowledge utilization. Prepared for the National Institute of Education and Far West Laboratory, 1980.

Hall, G. E., George, A. A., & Rutherford, W. L. Measuring stages of concern about the innovation: A manual for use of the SoC questionnaire. Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas, 1977.

Hall, G. E. & Loucks, S. F. Program definition and adaptation: Implications for inservice. Journal of Research and Development in Education, Winter, 1981, 14(2), 46-58.

Hall, G. E., Loucks, S. F., Newlove, B. W., & Rutherford, W. L. Levels of use of the innovation: A framework for analyzing innovation adoption. Journal of Teacher Education, 1975, 29(1), 52-56.

Hord, S. M. Analyzing administrator intervention behaviors. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Dallas, 1981.

Zigarmi, P. & Goldstein, M. A mapping technique for analysis of ethnographic data and its contribution to the development of a theory of innovation implementation. Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas, 1979.

Appendix A

The Research and Development Center for Teacher Education
University of Texas Austin 78712

August 1, 1980

Dear Principal:

This is your packet of materials for use during the time of your participation in the study. D will be your primary contact at the R&D Center for Teacher Education and will be talking to you on a regular basis during the school year. If you have any questions, please feel free to call either of us collect, at 512/471-3844.

In this packet we have included an overview of the study procedures and a description of the task we would like you to do. We have also enclosed several references in case you have interest in learning more about some of the concepts we have researched before.

We believe that individual administrators are an important source of information for understanding the ways in which education is changing and how the process can be facilitated. We sincerely appreciate your help and are looking forward to the opportunity to share experiences with you this year.

Sincerely,

District Coordinator School Coordinator

/jm

CONTENTS

I. Study Overview

II. Concept of Interventions

III. How to Describe Interventions

A. Parts of an Intervention

B. Practice

C. Procedures and Calendar

1. Sample Calendar Page

Also Enclosed:

SoC Manual
LoU/JTE Article
Calendar

I. STUDY OVERVIEW

PRINCIPAL-TEACHER INTERACTION STUDY
Conducted by CBAM Project, Texas R&D Center

The Texas R&D Center

The Texas R&D Center is one of seven university-based research centers that are funded by the National Institute of Education (NIE). Each center has a different research emphasis, ours being teacher education, both pre-service and inservice.

Several different research projects are housed within the Texas R&D Center. Our project is studying the change process in schools and colleges. We have had several different project names; however, we are usually referred to as the Research on Concerns-Based Adoption Project or the "CBAM" (pronounced "see-bam" as in "shazam") Project. CBAM stands for Concerns-Based Adoption Model.

The Focus of CBAM Research

This model is the conceptual basis for our studies. In this model and our work, the importance of the individual is emphasized. We believe that teachers and administrators should not be viewed as one large vague group and always treated the same. We believe that just as individual children are different, individual teachers and administrators are different. In our CBAM research we are attempting to understand and describe these individual differences and to point out to decision makers how important it is to attend to individual differences when designing staff development activities, planning and facilitating change, and evaluating the effects of new instructional approaches.

The focus of our research is on the change process, and we do mean process. We believe that change takes time and entails developmental growth for the teachers and administrators who are involved. We also believe that change is not accomplished by simply having a two-day "God bless you" workshop before school opens or by having an administrator send out a memo announcing the change.

The Design of CBAM Research

In the studies we have done in the past, as in this study, we believe that we need the assistance and insight of teachers and administrators who are experiencing the use of new approaches. Our research requires two-way interaction.

We just can't send out questionnaires and then process the returns with a computer. We need to talk to individuals and try and learn from their experiences.

Also, it is important to point out that we are doing descriptive research, not improvement research. Improvement research is designed to prove that one way (the treatment group) is better than another way (the comparison or control group). Descriptive research, on the other hand, is designed to describe what happens and to try and make sense out of it. There are no experimental and control groups; rather, the focus is on observing and describing what happens in "naturalistic" (i.e., the real world) settings.

The Study

In the study that we are asking you to help us with we want to look at the whole school at it is involved in using a new program. In our past studies, we have focused on what happens to teachers as they adopt new instructional materials and philosophies. Now we would like to look at the building principal as well.

The literature is filled with general statements that the principal is important. However, there are extremely few descriptions of what principals do. In this study we would like to watch how teachers and their principal work to implement a new approach or maintain an existing program. The study will focus on describing the experiences and concerns of teachers and their principal.

We feel that we can learn the most from studying a range of innovations and school settings. As a result we are planning to work with three schools in each of three different school districts. That way we can also understand the effects of the central district office, the particular community setting, and the kind of program being used.

Data Collection

Of course we need to collect data. We have planned our data collection so that it will take a minimum of your time (a maximum of 3 hours for teachers and 8 hours for the principal, over the school year). We want to disturb the school day as little as possible. To do this we will ask you to complete brief questionnaires at your convenience, and three times a year we would like to interview each teacher for no more than thirty minutes. In an interview we can more quickly learn about your individual experiences. The combination of a questionnaire and a short interview will keep your time to a minimum. We would like to tape record the interviews so that we can transcribe them later.

We also plan to talk with each principal by telephone on a regular basis so that we can keep in touch with what is happening between our scheduled visits.

Data Sharing

Confidentiality of data is always a concern. We have a standard set of policies about who does and who does not see the data. In this study we will use the following policies:

1. Individuals have access to their own data upon request.

2. Only I.D. numbers will be kept in our data files, thereby prohibiting anyone accessing individual data in the future.

3. No one outside the school building will see individual's (teachers or principal) identified data unless the individual grants permission.

4. During the period of the study (possibly two years) building principals will have access to data about the "concerns" of their teachers in relation to their "use" of the new approach. No other data will be shared with the principal without teacher approval.

5. Any information that teachers or building administrators provide the research effort, that is asked to be held in confidence will be.

6. Use of the data for the purposes of personnel evaluation is expressly prohibited.

We want to put these points in writing to indicate our feelings of responsibility as researchers. We can only learn if you are willing to share with us. This means that we have a major responsibility to merit your trust.

The one point that might need to be restated is our plan to share with each principal brief descriptions of what we call Stages of Concern and Levels of Use of the Innovation. We think that providing principals with some feedback can aid them in being more helpful in facilitating change and can help us better understand how teachers and their principal together experience the change process.

II. CONCEPT OF INTERVENTIONS

In order for you to understand what we are looking for in our telephone and face to face interviews, we would first like to introduce you to the concept of interventions.

Definition of Intervention

There are many definitions of intervention depending on the field in which it's being used. Some are simple and some are complex. We found it necessary to develop a definition of intervention which would be consistent with our purposes -- to study interventions in relationship to implementation of innovations. The working definition offered here is a result of extensive staff debate and analysis:

> An intervention is an action or event, or a set of actions or events, that influences use of the innovation. An event is distinguished from an action in that an event does not have an intervenor. The key criteria for an intervention are:
>
> 1) there is action(s) or event(s) and,
>
> 2) an effect on use of the innovation is observed or there is the potential for an effect on innovation use.
>
> In some cases, lack of an action which impacts use of the innovation can be classified as an intervention, e.g., failure to send a memo to decision makers.

Levels of Interventions

In order to talk about interventions in a more specific way, we've developed the concept of "levels" of interventions. Levels distinguish interventions on the basis of scope, duration, and number of individuals affected.

For example, an incident is a singular occurrence of an action or event. It is the smallest intervention unit -- incidents are characteristically small in terms of time involved and number of individuals involved.

> Examples: In order to let parents know about the new science curriculum, the school science specialist makes a presentation about it at the PTA meeting on September 16, 1977.
>
> Due to a snowstorm on January 20, 1977, the superintendent cancels classes, and the after-school in-service for teachers planned for that day had to be rescheduled.

The principal and two change facilitators from the local university met on September 26, 1976, to revise the Student/Faculty Handbook, in order to make it more consistent with the new Discipline Strategies being adopted at the school.

A tactic is an aggregation of incident interventions that, in combination, have an effect that is different or larger than the effects of the individual incidents.

Examples: During the fall of 1976, each week the principal publishes reminders of inservice days and deadlines for ordering materials in the bulletin for teachers.

For the first semester of implementation, the innovation advisors consult on a regular basis with individual teachers, in their classrooms, about specific discipline problems they encounter.

As you see, duration and scope of tactics are likely to be larger than those of incidents.

A strategy is even larger than a tactic. It usually covers a large portion of the implementation period and impacts most, if not all, of the individuals using the innovation. Strategies translate assumption and theory into practice.

Examples: During the course of the implementation period, each teacher and administrator from the junior high school attends a workshop with William Glasser, the developer of Reality Therapy, to enhance their understanding and appreciation of the technique.

The district equips each school with new science kits, equipment and books and arranges to ensure that films and consumable materials would be available to each teacher to use with the new science curriculum.

A strategy is a major part of the overall design for implementing an innovation. This overall design of a change effort is called a game plan. A game plan may be specified in advance or inferred in retrospect.

Example: The district phases in a new science curriculum for the elementary schools, providing orientation for administrators, training for teachers, and equipment and materials for each school, with subsequent evaluation of the program.

The interventions we have described are generally initiated by an administrator, staff developer, or someone else in authority. We realize that

there are other actions or events that influence the change effort: district level decisions (reassigning a principal), natural occurrences (a hurricane), teachers' actions (teachers sharing ideas about the innovation), etc. We consider these to be interventions also.

We introduced you to the concept of "levels" of interventions so that you would have an idea of the range of things we would consider to be interventions. What we would like you to do is describe interventions, both your own interventions and those of others (district coordinators, teachers, parents, etc.). However, we do not expect you to decide which level they fall under. In most change efforts we've studied, the majority of interventions have been at the incident level.

III. HOW TO DESCRIBE INTERVENTIONS

Parts of an Intervention

From our experience in analyzing interventions, we have found that certain elements are necessary to describe one:

WHO: Who initiated the action and who was the target(s)?

WHAT: What was actually done by the initiator? (a description of the action)

WHERE: Where was it done?

WHEN: When was it done (date) and how much time did it involve?

WHY: What happened that led to the action? What was its intent or purpose?

EFFECTS: In addition to describing interventions, we would also like to know something about the effects of these interventions (to the extent that they can be observed or inferred)

PRACTICE

Instructions: Read the following excerpt from an ethnographer's account of a change effort in a junior high school. Pick out and describe the interventions.

On several occasions the principal has acted as a model for how Reality Therapy works. On the last day of the inservice workshop she ran a demonstration class meeting. One teacher's comment was that the principal was sensitive during the workshop to the pressure faculty members were feeling about the beginning of school. When I interviewed the principal, she said that teachers were feeling that they were supposed to take on more than they did last year and that they had concerns like "I need to have order" or "I need to have structure and you are asking me to accept less than I would normally expect from students in the classroom." In particular, the principal felt that staff members were confused about her expectations for them during the upcoming year. She felt that they needed some ground rules, that they had to know what they were getting into in greater detail than the "theory" provided them with. The principal felt that conducting the demonstration class meeting helped to assure faculty members that they didn't have to change their mode of operation, that they simply had to do something in addition to what they normally did in responding to students. She said that she felt that the class meeting had this effect. She also talked with individual faculty members in conferences reaffirming that they really don't have to change as much as they may think they have to. Once again, the principal said that through the class meeting she helped clarify for faculty members what she expected from them.

A second way in which the principal used herself as a model for the Reality Therapy strategies was that she practiced the strategies herself on the first day of school and then related the success that she had to faculty members as she met them in the halls or in the lunchroom. Apparently, on the first day of school she was involved in an incident with a student in the lunchroom. She asked the student to describe what she had done and what she might have done differently. This particular interaction with the student occurred right near the faculty table in the lunchroom. The principal related that she was thrilled with the response that she got from the student and that she found it easier that she had thought to get kids to admit to what they had done. When she sat down to lunch with faculty members, she enthusiastically shared the response that she had gotten. She told me that the effect that this had on faculty members was that they could also acknowledge that they had tried the strategies and could admit whether or not they had been successful.

WHO WHAT WHERE WHEN WHY

Date	Who Did It?	Who Was the Target (or Targets)?	Action Taken: What Was Done?	Intent: Why Was It Done?	How Long Did the Action Take?	What Were the Effects?
?	Principal	Teachers at inservice.	Demonstrated a class meeting at inservice workshop.	To relieve pressure on teachers and their confusion about what was expected of them.	?	Helped assure faculty members that they didn't have to change, just do something in addition to what they were used to doing.
?	Principal	Individual teachers.	Had conferences.	To reaffirm that they didn't have to change as much as they thought they had to.	?	Helped reassure faculty and clarify expectations.
1st Day of School	Principal	Student and teachers watching.	Principal used Reality Therapy with student in lunchroom.	To discipline student and model technique for teachers.	?	Principal excited about response from student.
1st Day of School	Principal	Teachers in lunchroom.	Principal enthusiastically shared response from students.	To share successful use of Reality Therapy.	?	Teachers would know they could discuss successes and failures with Reality Therapy.

PROCEDURES: INTERVIEWS AND CALENDAR

We have enclosed a calendar for the 1980-81 school year for your use in recording interventions. We are interested in what you have done, as well as actions taken by others such as teachers or district personnel.

During the week, please jot down reminders of interventions on the dates they occur. Your interviewer will call you on the telephone every two weeks to ask you questions centered on these interventions -- such as,

a. the specific date

b. what happened that led to the intervention

c. a description of the action(s) taken

d. the reasons (purposes/intent) for doing it

e. the amount of time spent on this action

f. the effects of the actions(s).

After each calendar page there is space to allow for elaboration of the interventions noted. Information on this section of the page may help you recall the details of interventions when talking to the interviewer. An example of calendar notes and elaboration is provided on the next page.

In addition to the telephone calls, your interviewer will visit you at your school three times during the school year. These interviews will involve the same questions, in greater depth.

NOVEMBER 1979

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4	5	6 staff meeting	7	8	9	10
11	12 ordered tables	13	14	15	16	17

Date	Who Did It?	Who Was the Target (or Targets)	Action Taken: What Was Done?	Intent: Why Was It Done?	How Long Did the Action Take?	What Were the Effects?
11/6	Principal	All science teachers.	At a staff meeting at the school, I encouraged teachers to take more field trips and utilize the area around the school for teaching science.	Using the outdoors is part of the new science curriculum, but teachers are not accustomed to this type of field trip.	15 min.	More field trips being taken.
11/12	Principal	Sixth grade teachers and students.	I ordered flat top tables for science room.	Science specialist suggested we need flat top desks for microscopes and experiments.	5 min.	None yet--they haven't arrived, but teachers beginning to realize the importance of teaching science.

SAMPLE 11

Data Collection Summary (each year of project*)

Teachers

Teacher SoC, LoU, Innovation Configuration (15 minute questionnaire, 30 minute interview)

3 times: May '80, October '80, April '81

School Climate and Principal Leadership Style (45 minute questionnaire)

1 time: January '81

Interventions Made on Teachers (selected teachers, 30 minute interview)

1 time: January '81

Total time: 3 hours max.

Principal

Principal Interventions (20 minute phone call interviews and up to three one-hour visits on-site)

Every other week: August '80 - May '81

Principal Concerns (15 minute questionnaire)

3 times: May '80, October '80, April '81

School Climate and Principal Leadership Style (45 minute questionnaire)

1 time: January '81

Total time: 8 hours max.

*The project is presently planning a one year study, but we would like to keep open the option of returning for a second year.